THE KINEMATOGRAPH AND LANTERN WEEKLY.

Edited by THEODORE BROWNE.

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A Candid Critic Candidly Criticised.

WHAT IS A "COMPETENT OPERATOR."

To the Editor "The Kinematograph & Lantern Weekly."

Sir,—As I expected, the formation of the B.O.A. is beginning to touch the conscience of some of those people who do two men's work for one man's pay, and I ask all those to send in their candid opinions, especially the man near Leeds, who is bill inspector, stage manager, electrician, bioscope operator and goodness knows what. I take it that your correspondent is an electrician at one of our music halls, and has picked up the secrets of operating after the machine and everything has been fixed up for him, and tells the manager he can run the show, which he does, by luck, robbing the operator of his job. Now, what would he think if I came to his theatre with a picture show and after a few weeks approached the manager and said that I was an electrician and working for my firm, who were paying me a fair wage, but for a little extra, say 10s. per week, I would do the electrician's work? I think he would look upon the operator in the same light as we look upon the electrician who is doing the double work. Apart from that, where is the electrician's place when the house in darkness? Should anything go wrong, Public Opinion answers, "AT HIS POST, THE SWITCHBOARD ON THE STAGE," not in the kinematograph box turning the handle for 5s. or 10s. per week extra. A great responsibility rests with the operator, who as a rule is showing from the front of the house.

Now, Mr. Editor, how is any person of average intelligence (to use your correspondent's own words) going to learn operating in a week or so? I myself have had thirty years' professional lantern and kinematograph work, following in my father's business, and am still open to learn anything new. You may as well tell me that a man can go into a shop, buy a camera, get a few hints from the salesman, and in a week or so call himself a first-class photographer. No, an operator is an operator, and an electrician is an electrician.

I ask my 10s. per week friend if he has ever travelled the provinces with a bioscope, working four and six towns a week, with long railway journeys in between; and using every kind of current and voltage, and lime when required. Has he worked the London halls, four and five shows nightly, coming out of a Turkish bath box to get on a tram or a bus to his other show, and then back again? No, I am afraid my friend of a week or so's learning has not, or he would see what an operator really is.

Now let us look at it from another point of view. Of all the London music halls I only know of three where the electrician runs the show. I do not want to mention names, but I think this is right. The L.C.C. I know do not approve of this, and we hope some day to alter it. Now take the Moss and Stoll Tour. Does Mr. Tetlow allow the electricians to run the show? Certainly not, he keeps his own staff of operators, and shifts them about from place to place, each one to his own district. Take Mr. Walter Gibbons, who knows the picture trade as well as anybody does. Does he trust his shows to be run by electricians? Certainly not; he puts it into the hands of a competent firm. Take the firms who provide the shows. They prefer their own men in charge, and would not care to send expensive films except to their own operators.

Your correspondent says, "Let us be fair to all classes." This is the motive of the B.O.A., and let him also remember that there are as many operators and lanternists out of the music hall world as there are in it. With regard to comparing his show with others. How can we compare his show with others when we do not know where it is? I am not ashamed of my show or my name, and I think a man who writes and says he is not ashamed to do another man's work for 25s. less per week naturally keeps his name back.

One more item and I finish. He says that two hours' attendance at the hall is required. Now this is wrong. The two houses nightly keep an operator at the theatre all the evening, and in the day time he has to be at the shop making resistances and doing all necessary repairs that have to be done. It is quite clear that my 10s. per week friend does not know much about operating. If he is an electrician let him keep to that, and think of the saying "Live and let live," or in the near future we will have Mr. Harry Lauder receiving a letter from some electrician or working staff individual saying "Send down your band parts and props. and I will sing your song for 10s. per week and save the railway fare, etc."

Yours, etc.,
E. Catlin, Chairman, B.O.A.
Surrey Theatre, June 1st, 1907.

To the Editor "The Kinematograph & Lantern Weekly."

Sir,—On reading this week's Journal I was struck with the letter from a correspondent who styles himself Electrician operator, at the paltry sum of 10/- per week. Is your correspondent aware that three years ago I myself was receiving £3 per week for the same work he is now doing for 10/-? Its the likes of him who have brought the salary down to what it is, (namely, 35/- per week.) Now he seems to think that this sum is too much, or rather he says its a fictitious price and far above the market value. Would my employer pay me £2 per week if I was not worth it? I say no. As for my employer getting an electrician at the hall to run the show, he will never do it, as no firm of repute would trust costly films to inexperienced men. An operator is an operator, not a handle turner, as our 10/- a week man seems to be. Has your correspondent ever worked the provinces, and can he take a kinematograph outfit on tour through England, Ireland and Scotland (which I have done), using all

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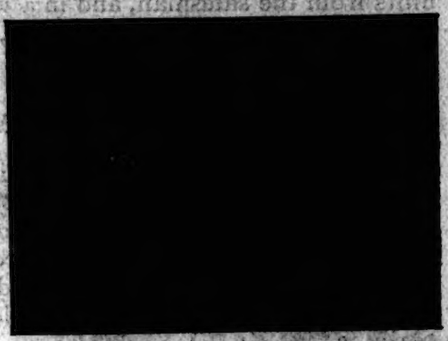

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kinds of voltages, and lime light where no electric is to be had and visiting some of the finest Theatres and Halls in existence? It is an easy matter to run the kinematograph when everything has been fitted up for you and it only requires the handle to be turned, which our 10/- per week man seems to be doing. I maintain that every operator is an electrican from practical experience, as he must be, but an electrician is not a bioscope operator in a week, or two, as it is impossible to be so in the time as our 10s. per week man says. I have been 8½ years bioscope operating and I do not know everything connected with it yet. I may not be of ordinary intelligence, (perhaps not), but for all that I will take an outfit anywhere and give a first class show, electric or oxyhydrogen light and work any machine on the market. As for your correspondent becoming a B.O.A., he is not eligible, as one of our rules is that no electrician operator would be admitted as a member of the B.O.A., also that no operator electrician should be allowed to join.

Yours, etc.,

A MEMBER OF THE B.O.A.

TO THE EDITOR "THE KINEMATOGRAPH & LANTERN WEEKLY."

Sir,—I beg to submit a few lines in reply to the "Candid Critic" of the recently formed B.O.A. I take the letter point by point: The first things he points out are our weak spots. As he is so quick to find these why has he not joined our ranks and enabled us to draft an absolutely perfect programme? Next, after touching lightly on a mythical "cocksuredness" (word patented) he, one man I presume, who works a bioscope as a side line, tells fifty or sixty operators—who have met together in friendly converse to enlighten and improve the lot of those engaged in their own profession, and among whom are many who forgot more than he ever knew about electricity, before touching a bioscope—that it "must modify its demands." It has not used the word "demand" for it has been absolutely barred from our program and is not used in our discussions. Nor is our movement an "aggressive" one in any sense of the word.

Further he says definitely and without hesitation, in fact at once, we "are too ambitious."

As to animosity against electricians, where does it exist outside our friend's imagination? And if it does, why should he intensify it by "Candid Criticisms." Should he not meet us half-way in our endeavour to promote good feeling between all workers so that they may work side by side instead of in opposition? As regards a man earning a little extra money as a reward for his intelligence, why does not C.C. join the B.O.A., and perhaps some day get more than 5/- to 10/- per week? Under the present rules it is open to all efficient operators. According to C.C.'s reasoning an efficient operator is one who can run a film through a machine without catching it alight, or can put it on the screen right way up. This can be learnt in a week and he need know nothing more. Of course it is just possible the B.O.A. committee may differ from this definition.

His next paragraph deals with the question of pay from the employer's point of view—good man. It is not necessary for "C.C." to champion their cause—he will gain no glory by it and the employers will not feel complimented. Every intelligent worker should have his employer's interests at heart, for in the common order of things he must, seeing that his employer is the source of his own welfare.

Our candid friend anticipates a host of indignant replies, Why should he? Has he asked for them? I sincerely hope no members of the B.O.A. may say unkind things of him. As to misrepresentation, I am sure as a member of the B.O.A. committee who has attended every meeting, nobody cannot accuse him of that.

"Demand," "Agression," "Strikes" are as far from our program as Candid Critic is from knowing what he is talking about. He can scarcely be accused of misrepresentation. His statements read more like ignorance than anything. He says "Do not run away with the idea that I am opposed to the B.O.A." No, just stay where you are "with the idea."

If the Candid Critic had taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with the objects of the B.O.A. before writing he would have known that we do not intend to bind members to any figure, but as a member he would be allowed to compete with all comers, and if any person offered to do his 10/- show for 5/- he would be allowed to do it for 2/6 per week, if his employer had no objection.

I cannot state fully here, and it is not necessary that I should, the aims and objects of the B.O.A. Anybody can obtain them by applying to the office 29, Wellington Street, London, and there is no secret about their doings. The B.O.A. does not fear the light of day. Let Candid Critic join the B.O.A. and have a voice in its formation and management. Let every man who is an operator work in common unison for the good of everbody concerned, the employer to work for his men, the men to work for their masters and each and everyone to work for the kinematograph trade and the profession of operating, and save us from those who sit on the fence and throw stones at those who are doing their best.—Yours truly,

HERBERT MERRITT, Dublin.

P.S.—Does Candid Critic really fear the 35/- per week or the standard of proficiency by examination for operators?

MORE CANDID CRITICISM.

TO THE EDITOR "THE KINEMATOGRAPH & LANTERN WEEKLY."

Sir,—I should like to agree with your correspondent who criticises the B.O.A. in several things that he says. I think he is right in his remarks about the salary question, and in his defence of men who do not make operating all their work. I am not an electrician, and though I get more than 10s. for my living picture work, I look on the money from this as payment for only part of my occupation. I do not expect a "living salary" for each of my duties, any more than a man who works in wood does. What would anyone think of a man who wanted £2 a week as a joiner, £2 as a carver, and £2 as a polisher, because he happened to do all these classes of work? He would be laughed at, and it would be pointed out to him that he was not *each* of these things for a full week. In the same way some operators want a full week's pay for operating which only takes up a part of their time. Ten shillings would be a bad salary for an

operator who did nothing else, just as it would be for a polisher, but if the operator had plenty of time for another occupation he is in the same position as the polisher who is also getting paid for joinering and carving.

Some of our memories go back to the days of the old lantern operating when the man in charge of the lantern got 10/- per show from the lecturer and very often had only one show a week. For that he had to cart about more paraphernalia than is necessary with any kinematograph, and yet I never heard complaints about the salary—they were content to take the fat with the lean. Now would a minimum salary have been wise or just in a case like that? The B.O.A. will be doing a useful work if it can get the incompetent men kicked out, but if it is going to have a regulation as to salary and make hard and fast rules about operators not doing other work, I for one do not agree with it, so far as music hall business is concerned. The question of hours, duties, salary, etc., should be no one's business but the employee's and his master's and if the latter thinks his work is not sufficiently long to occupy a man's time he should be at liberty to pay a little extra to anyone in or out of the theatre to do it, so long as he is competent. If the Association will get up a test examination and divide operators into different classes according to their experience and also start classes for teaching the technicalities of operating and the theory of the business, the trade would benefit, but I hope it is not going to introduce tyrannical trade union methods.

Yours, etc.,
GLASGOW.

[There are several misstatements in the above letter which will be found corrected in those of other correspondents and in our remarks on our editorial page.—ED.]

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VIEWS AND FILMS INDEX.

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The Derby.

By the time these lines appear in print the great national turf event will have taken place. Writing before the event, we are unable to give particulars of the race or the outcome of the various attempts to film it, but indications go to prove that some special efforts are to be made by living picture firms, and there should be a large number of London halls showing the race in detail to-night (Wednesday).

The Gaumont, Urban and the Warwick Companies are all, we understand, to be represented on the course. The first named has made elaborate arrangements to secure a complete picture. Mr. Welsh and others will be on the spot early, snapping up scenes on the road and on the course, from a motor car, and a film of about 200 ft. showing the whole of the racing and some of the course scenes will be on at the Hippodrome and most of the other important London halls the same evening. A more comprehensive picture, of some 400 ft. will also be supplied. If perfection of arrangement counts for anything, the Gaumont production should be a "clinker."

The Urban Co., have secured the privilege of entry to the grounds of the "Durdans," by permission of Lord Roseberry. The result should be of interest to those acquainted with the appearance of leaders of society of both sexes.

At "Chrono House."

IT is almost unnecessary to explain that the new premises of the Gaumont Co. at Sherwood Street are indicated in the above title. The Chrono projector and the impressively named Chronomegaphone are known to every member of the trade, and the headquarters of the firm could hardly be better named. The Gaumont Co. have now what is probably the most convenient and largest office building in the business so far as England is concerned. We hope shortly to publish a series of photographs of the various departments, which will go to show this.

The Gaumont Co. make the pleasant announcement that they intend to once more go in strongly for the topical side of the business. It must have puzzled many to account for their recent omissions in this department, but the sole cause was the recent fire at their laboratory, which, of course, rather disorganised affairs for a time. The works are now in proper trim again, and the Gaumont Co. give good evidence of their intentions for the future in the elaborate arrangements they have made for the Derby, which are alluded to elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the Chronomegaphone seems to have established itself as a permanent item of the Hippodrome program. It recently made its 300th performance at this hall, and enjoys "star" lettering on the bills, instead of the half line with which the average picture turn has to be contented. In various quarters, too, one hears envious remarks as to the figure paid for the turn, and it is whispered by people who are in a position to know that the total sum paid rises well into four figures. This is by the way, and only mentioned here as evidence of the drawing capacity of the instrument, as they appear to the Hippodrome authorities—a pretty cute body of men.

This firm has gained what seems likely to prove a valuable concession, in the shape of the exclusive bioscope rights of the impending Oxford Pageant. All indications go to show that this will be the most important function of the kind yet arranged. The scheme is more ambitious than in previous pageants, and the interest in it appears more widespread. In view of the undoubted evidence of a better demand for good class films of this nature, a remarkably successful series appears likely.

The Lantern and Kino in Opera.

COVENT GARDEN, during the representation of the "Ring" used the optical lantern and the kinematograph to an extent likely to astonish those who are unaware of the instruments possibilities in the presentation of scenic effects. Thus, that indispensable adjunct, realistic lightning, is produced by means of zinc slide sheets marked with forked cuts to represent a variety of flashes and a disc aperture, turned rapidly in front of the projector, gives the requisite effects of succeeding flashes. The beautiful cloud effects are also projected by lantern, and the rippling of water by slides marked with wavy lines, which are moved by clockwork. The "Rheingold" rainbow is also done by means of slides, whil the new "Ride of the Valkyries" is shown by kinematograph, and is generally admitted to be better than the old method. There was a special rehearsal in Surrey for the taking of the film, which was made by the Graphic Kinematograph Co. of Charing Cross Road.

PART III.

(*Continued from Page 43.*)

THEN followed some experiments with drums, over which sheets of sensitised celluloid films were drawn, the edge being pressed into a narrow slot in the surface, similar in construction to the old tin-foil phonograph. A starting-and-stopping device very similar to the one now in use was also applied. The pictures were then taken specially to the number of two hundred or so, but were limited in size, owing to the rotundity of surface, which brought only the centre of the picture into focus. The sheet of celluloid was then developed, fixed, and otherwise prepared and placed on a transparent drum, bristling at its outer edge with brass pins. When the drum was rapidly turned, these came in contact with the primary current of an induction coil, and each image was lighted up in the same manner as described in the previous disc experiment, with this difference only—that the inside of the drum was illuminated. The next step was the adoption of a highly sensitised strip of celluloid half an inch wide, but this proving unsatisfactory, owing to inadequate size, one inch pictures were substituted on a band one and a half inches wide, the additional width being required for the perforations on the outer edge. These perforations occur at close and regular intervals, in order to enable the teeth of a locking device to hold the film steady for nine-tenths of the one-forty-sixth part of a second, when a shutter opens rapidly and admits a beam of light, causing an image or phase of the movement of the subject. The film is then jerked forward in the remaining one-tenth of the one-forty-second part of a second, and held in rest while the shutter has again made its round, admitting another circle of light and so on until forty-six impressions are taken a second, or 2,760 a minute. This speed yields 165,600 pictures in an hour, an amount amply sufficient for an evening's entertainment, when unreeled before the eye. By connecting the two ends of the strip, and thus forming a continuous band, the pictures can be indefinitely multiplied. In this connection it is interesting to note that were the spasmodic motions added up by themselves, exclusive of arrests, on the same principle that a train record is computed independently of stoppages, the incredible speed of twenty-six miles an hour could be shown. The advantages of this system over a continuous band and of a slotted shutter forging widely ahead of the film would be this, that in that case only the fractional degree of light comprised in the 1-2720th part of a second is allowed to penetrate to the film, at a complete sacrifice of all details, whereas in the present system of stopping and starting each picture gets one-hundreth part of a second's exposure with a lens but slightly stopped down, time amply sufficient, as any photographer knows, for the attainment of excellent detail even in an ordinarily good light. It must be understood that only one camera is used for these strips and not a battery of cameras as in Mr. Muybridge's photographs of "the horse in motion." The next step after making the negative band is to form a positive or finished series of reproductions from the negative, which is passed through a machine for the purpose, in conjunction with a blank strip of film, which, after development and general treatment, is replaced in the kinetoscope, or phonokinetoscope, as the case may be. When a phonograph record has been taken simultaneously with such a strip, the two are started together by the use of a simple but effective device, and kept so all through, the phonograph record being in perfect accord with the strip. In this conjunction the tiny holes with which the edge of the celluloid film is perforated correspond exactly with the phonographic record, and the several devices of the camera, such as the shifting of the film and the operations of the shutter, are so regulated as to keep pace with the indentations made by the stylus upon the phonographic wax cylinder, one motor serving as a source of common energy to camera and phonograph when they are electrically and mechanically linked together.

(*To be continued.*)

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Kinematograph & Lantern Weekly

JUNE 6, 1907.

During the past week several letters have come to the office expressing surprise and annoyance owing to the fact that we have *apparently* ignored the persons concerned, not having dealt with their products and doings in our columns. Let us hasten to say that we have no wish to show favour nor have we intention to exclude from our journal, particulars of any firm in the trade, whether advertisers or not. Our policy is to deal with as many matters that time will permit, but in every case to deal with such matters thoroughly. Every concern, be it great or small, will be dealt with in due course, but as we are determined to publish only the most accurate accounts obtainable, and also, wherever possible, to obtain our intelligence first hand by special interview; it must not be expected of us, that a complete and detailed account of every firm's doings can appear in the first few numbers of our publication. Coming out as we do weekly, every member of our staff is kept fully alive with all the work envolved in our new venture and we are doing our utmost to keep pace with current happenings.

Coming to the solid and more technical side of the business, we prefer to take the great pains, and consequently the extended time necessary, to a proper digestion and investigation of the process of development in kinematograph science before publishing our reports thereon. In like manner, when a letter comes to hand in which the writer claims to be the originator of *this*, and the inventor of *that*; we do not follow the unwise course of rushing into print with these bare statements. We rather prefer to satisfy ourselves; because we believe we shall then best satisfy our readers, that the claims put forward can be, and are, fully substantiated by reference to the files at the Patent office, or from other authenticated sources.

It is a common thing to find ideas duplicated, not only in places and persons remotely separated, but even at the very time of conception; whilst it seems a weakness of human nature to forget the claims and rights of others when one's own interests and enthusiasm for novelty run high. We know of a number of incidents that might be cited to substantiate the fact. A file of memo. headings from kinematograph showmen furnishes matter, the full total of which forms a puzzle beyond human solution in its reconciliation of all the statements therein contained. As publishers, therefore, it behoves us to discriminate and divide the wheat from the chaff, and thus give to our readers the food that is worth digesting.

Next week we start our series on "Projectors," and would like to take opportunity of saying that we intend making a very critical examination of every machine on the market. The details and hints in reference to these machines will be given after a careful and unbiassed inspection, and we hope in this way to put on record information that will serve as a reliable guide to the inexperienced. Manufacturers are requested to note that we make no claim to having made a selection in order of merit.

We question if it is a wise policy to let the general public know too much of the inner side of film production. We know a living picture enthusiast who not only visited every show where living pictures were announced, but used to visit our office and discuss the merits of the latest productions at such length that he was difficult to get rid of. But his warmth suddenly cooled. A sensational film of striking interest absorbed his attention, and as he knew the locality he was more than certain that it was a scene from real life. But the incidents were so far-fetched that even the veriest tyro could not but realise that in this instance fiction was stranger than truth. We pointed out how the fakes had been managed, and finally he left in a huff, saying the whole business was a huge swindle.

There are many others who would go anywhere for a first-class living picture show, and who implicitly believe all they witness as having happened in the ordinary run of life. What disappointment they must feel at seeing in our illustrated weeklies pictures showing "How a railway outrage is staged for the living picture man," or "Acting a railway disaster for the bioscope." All interest is lost and enthusiasm killed by such an exposure, and the victim never looks on a living picture show again without seriously questioning how much is real and how much "bunkum." No, the film merchant is unwise to "give the show away," and ultimately such an unwise policy must recoil on his own head.

The article "Suggestions to Film Makers," which appeared in our second number, suggested that living pictures could be utilised to teach methods of domestic economy. The suggestion was a good one, and one which it would pay a film maker to take up. We do not say this "without our book," for a notice has just been received by us from the St. Pancras Mothers and Infants Society, whose headquarters are to be at the

People's Hall, Chalton Street, Euston Road, stating that mothers and girls are to be taught how a baby should be clothed, fed, washed and tended in small ailments. Among the novel features there will be weighing machines, a twopenny banana box fitted as a cradle, dolls dressed in model sets of clothes, demonstrations for cutting babies' clothes, charts and illustrations and *lantern lectures*.

Now is the opportunity of the film man to come along with a series of suitable subjects. Undoubtedly the movement will extend to other boroughs and other towns, and the sale of such subjects should be consequently guaranteed, but there would also be a large demand from our places of entertainment for such utilitarian subjects. We believe there is big scope for good films of this character—in fact, time after time it has been urged that the plot and farcical element has been overdone, and that more solid food is required and cannot be obtained in sufficient variety. Now a chance offers which we shall be pleased to see taken up.

The very candid friend of the Bioscope Operators' Association, who wrote the letter published in the last issue of the WEEKLY, made a strong point of the impossibility of securing the general recognition of a minimum wage on the part of exhibitors and showmen. He also alleged, among other things, that any "person of average intelligence can learn to operate a machine in a week or so." A representative of this paper has spent several days gleaning opinions on these matters, and he has found, in the first place, that the opposition to the minimum wage idea is not by any means so general as the writer made out, and in the second, that his other contention is almost without exception denied, even by those who think it has no bearing on the first question. It is pointed out, first of all, that B.O.A. members are not required to "subscribe to a minimum wage clause" in the sense indicated by our correspondent. Membership is not to be limited to operators receiving any particular salary. It is true that among the objects of the Association is "To secure the recognition of a minimum rate of pay for each class of work," but any one joining has a right to express an opinion on this, as on all other matters.

With regard to the question of a minimum salary, we need hardly point out that in our monthly we frequently urged the desirability of securing this. Our opinions have not changed—indeed, they have been strengthened by conversations which our representative has had with members of the trade. Exhibitors would not object to a minimum wage, which their competitors as well as they would have to pay, but each individually would not pay it, while a competitor was enable to undercut him. In other words, they would pay the stipulated salary, if the Association was strong enough to ensure that all operators would get it. Here is obviously another incentive for every ambitious operator to join the B.O.A. We do not think it is suggested, even by the most enthusiastic reformer in the B.O.A. ranks, that any early attempt should be made to secure a minimum wage. If any do possess such an idea, the sooner they are disabused the better. No regulation as to wages could stand unless it was supported by an examining or licensing scheme, and no plan of the latter character could be effective unless it was approved and controlled by the committees of the various councils having charge of the licensing of entertainments. It is our strong opinion now, as it was two years ago, that only by the co-operation of the councils can any useful change is the operators' conditions of work be effected and we hope that strong representations will be made to these bodies, who must be made to realise that the public safety depends upon the efficiency of the operator.

The second argument of our correspondent is not to be laughed at. He asserts that one can learn all the duties of an operator in a week. Now, where the electric arc is used, there is some truth in this statement. An intelligent person could doubtless learn the essentials in the period he names—enough, at least, to guard against accident. Where the limelight is used it is a different matter. (It should be remembered, by the way, that no one can be really said to have learnt how to operate a machine who is not competent to use *any* illuminant). Admitting for a moment that the operator's duties are to be confined to working a machine with an electric arc. The machine is already set up; all he has to do is to focus correctly and take the usual precautions against the firing of the film. But, admitting this, is the importance of the work lessened? An error would have just as serious results as if a year's study were necessary. It is a generally recognised fact that work entailing responsibility of the character attached to operating should be well paid. It is not fair to pay 10s. a week to a man when a slip on his part might lead, at the very least, to the destruction of a film costing perhaps £10. And there is no guarantee that the damage would end at that. The terrible catastrophe at Paris seems forgotten already, yet where could one find a better argument for the employment of every precaution?

Another argument urged in the same letter can be answered in the same way. Because the actual operating occupies two hours at the outside, it is urged that it is not of sufficient importance to call for the employment of a separate man. But one cannot judge of the value of work by the time it occupies. This is assuming the truth of the statement, which is to say the least by no means generally correct. It is worth good money because it calls for the exercise of constant care and watchfulness. Is it possible for a man called away hurredly from his other work to the bioscope to do justice to it? Can a scene shifter, an electrician, or whatever he may be, spare the necessary time to look after his machine? The answer is obvious to all who have seen shows run under these conditions, indeed we think the strongest argument against the employment of this class of operators is to be found in their own exhibitions. In nine cases out of ten they never enter the box until a few minutes before they are required to operate the machine. No talk about the laws of supply and demand answers these facts. We are willing to admit that no one would pay 35/- a week for what he could get equally well done for 10/-, but, we have yet to be convinced that it it is ever well done at that figure.

Notes on Current Topics.

Local Pictures.

I recently visited a large London music hall where a feature is made of lantern slide advertisements. For ten minutes before the curtain rose on the first turn, pictures advertising the usual articles were thrown on the screen one after another. They were very highly coloured slides, not exactly artistic, but as advertisements they were good, the pictures being in some cases a reproduction of well-known posters, and in others fresh and very often clever designs. But what struck me most about these pictures was their clearness. I suppose after constantly seeing living pictures they came with the greater contrast. The detail of every picture was perfect, possibly because a very large picture—much larger than that of the "living" picture—was thrown on the screen. Now and again, between advertisements of soaps and rubber heels, a photographic slide of topical interest was put on, and the same virtue was present here. The first thought that occurred to me was "what a pity we cannot get kinematograph pictures to show the same detail." The second was that here was a method by which the smallest hall could have its regular topical picture.

Taking the Local Incidents.

A good many people labour under the delusion that slide making is a laborious undertaking, calling for elaborate apparatus and years of experience. Apparently the majority of operators are included among the number, or why is the opportunity I have alluded to not more generally taken advantage of? A fortnight after buying my first camera I was able to produce some very good slides without any assistance but the advice given me when purchasing the camera and that to be gleaned from a cheap and popular handbook on photography. Anyone else could do the same. The cost is small and the work may be produced quickly as well as cheaply, so that a slide of any local happening could be shown at the same evening's performance. Now, the public likes local films, and experience shows that the offer of a prize to anyone who is shown on the sheet invariably has a good effect on the size of the audience. Films are too expensive to be used for this work, except on special occasions, but there is no reason why a regular history of local events from day to day should not be given by the still pictures. The cost to the exhibiting firm or to the manager of the hall need not exceed 5s. a week. The interest excited should be worth £5 at least in hard cash, for that amount of money would be paid for admittance by people who knew that they or their friends were snapshotted. I should be very much indebted to any operator who has tried this scheme if he will communicate its success or failure to me.

Steady Pictures.

The question of how to secure flickerless projection, so that the same clearness is found in the kinematograph picture as in that from a lantern slide, does not appear to be any nearer settlement. Flicker is not present in an objectionable degree nowadays, but still, it is present, and becomes annoying when one has to sit and look at the screen for an hour or more. Improvements in the precision of the apparatus used for taking and reproducing the film would possibly lessen the flicker to an even greater degree than at present, but most people seem to doubt if it will ever be entirely done away with, unless a revolutionary change in the present methods of representing motion comes about, and there is no reason to anticipate that.

A Safety Film.

We have heard little of the un-inflammable film recently. Here is another standing problem. There is no doubt that the inventor of such an article would get, if not a fortune, at least a very good monetary reward, for a firm making a film base equal in other respects to celluloid but lacking its inflammability would undoubtedly command the market in that article. The difficulty appears to be in securing the flexibility and other virtues of celluloid without its great fault. I have seen at least one new uninflammable material which was as transparent as celluloid, and said to be cheaper and more durable, but which lacked the important requirement of flexibility. It almost seems as if it would pay the various kinematograph firms of the world to found and subsidise a laboratory for the purpose of solving the problem. There is no doubt that it could be solved, if gone into exhaustively and the cost to the firms individually would be insignificant.

Inadequate Programmes.

I alluded in my last week's notes to what I consider one of the most obvious faults of the usual kinematograph turn in a music hall,—its length. I have lately had evidence that I am not alone in the opinion that the public would gladly welcome more pictures, even at the expense of the other part of the program, for I have made it a point to obtain the opinion of several friends, in no way connected with the trade, on the matter, and without exception they complained of having seen only one or two pictures. More than one made the remark that several of the performers would not have been missed if a larger number of films had been shown in their place. This it will be remembered is the opinion of the public and not of interested persons. In the music hall program the kinematograph is merely regarded as a turn instead of as a separate entertainment as I maintain it should be. "American Bioscope" ranks on the bill equal to "So and So, the comedian"—with the difference that whereas the doubtful humour of the latter is perhaps rewarded with £10 a week, the bioscope gets £5 or less for an infinitely superior entertainment. I should consider that a well balanced entertainment which allotted a half or at least a third of its programme to the pictures. I don't think the average member of the audience would grumble if this were done. The show would have to be better as well as longer than that customary to-day. Only a few special halls now show any large proportion of topical films, though subjects of this class are put out almost every day, but a good show should be a complete record of events from day to day, as they happen. No week need lack of at least one attraction of this character, for where nothing of national importance has fallen to be filmed, there are local happenings well worthy of taking. I wonder if any exhibitor has tried the drawing effects of a continuous series of local subjects?

Playing to the Gallery.

An instance of the short-sightedness of managers which leads them to buy comics, and nothing but comics, comes to hand to substantiate the remarks I recently made *re* appealing to the gallery at the expense of the more intelligent section of the audience. A manager recently wrote to a manfacturing firm to the effect that he wanted humourous subjects solely, because this class of film kept the house in a roar from start to finish. He said "the house," but he would have been more accurate if he had said "the gallery." It was an instance of the prevailing error of regarding the noisiest section of the audience as the most important. The gallery always expresses its approval or disapproval noisily, the stalls are rarely moved to applause, even by a turn that strongly appeals to them. Therefore the gallery has the biggest voice in deciding what sort of a program shall be given, and the decent section refrains from regular attendance at the halls. Yet it is the stalls and dear seats which bring the money.

I return to this subject because it is likely that if the higher taste were catered for we should see a general improvement in the standard of films, which even the manufacturers would not allege to be very high just now. Such an improvement would attract that part of the public which has sickened of comics, but might be converted into living picture enthusiasts if a better class of subject became the rule. The creation of such a public would be certain to work to the good of the trade generally.

Correspondence.

[We do not accept responsibility for the views expressed by our correspondents.]

PIRACY.

TO THE EDITOR "THE KINEMATOGRAPH & LANTERN WEEKLY."

DEAR SIR,—Apropos of your remarks on the subject of piracy in your first issue, the following free translation of a paragraph appearing in the last number of *The Rivista Fono-Cinematographica*, Milan, calls for comment:—

"We have all had the chance of observing how many kinematographic subjects are copied one from another; as, for instance, *La Disperata*, which is made by Gaumont, Pathé and Urban. In future the firm of Gaumont & Co., of Paris, with the view of avoiding these piracies, has resolved to deposit with the French Chamber of Commerce the title and the description of its pictures, so that the imitation may be avoided."

The paragraph is rather vague, but a definite charge of piracy is made against one or more of three firms. It is an undisputed fact that piracy is largely practised. Indeed, effrontry is carried to its limit when not only are film subjects ruthlessly copied, but—as was the case in one instance—the advertised description as well, and exhibitors could read, on the same page of advertisement, two firms advertising one subject under the same title, and with almost word for word the same description!

As this firm is named in the Italian charge of piracy, we desire to most emphatically deny the truth of the allegation in so far as it affects us. We are, unfortunately, affected by the piracy of others. Owing to leakage, and to the unscrupulous methods of trade competitors, particulars of film subjects which have entailed much thought, expense, danger and labour are, somehow, carried at an early stage to a rival firm which does not hesitate to make use of the information by staging and producing similar or approximating films. Quite recently two of our subjects have been so maltreated and produced, and they are only items in a long list. There would be no treachery if temptation were absent. An employee does not seek to sell his firm's secrets unless he receive encouragement from the purchaser; therefore the initiative must come from outside. And, once a plot is divulged, the rest is easy for the pirate.

The Urban Trading Co. produces its own subjects in a perfectly legitimate manner, and cannot be accused of taking a mean and treacherous advantage of its competitors by filching the subjects of any other producer.

Yours, etc.,
C. URBAN, Managing Director C.U.T. Co., Ltd.

Lectures with Limelight Views and Gramophone "Turns."

One of the latest efforts in the direction of reforming prisoners is to give them humorous, scientific, and historical lectures illustrated by limelight views. The report of the Scottish Prison Commissioners, contains particulars of the entertainments. One Glasgow prison had twenty lecture nights. Aberdeen Prison had eleven, and Dumfries twelve. The subjects were:—Through Norway with a Camera; Glasgow to Homburg and up the Rhine; Mary Queen of Scots; "On Music," with gramophone records.

Brevities.

The other night one of the new double-decked cars, which it is proposed to run in Edinburgh, had a spin from Tollcross to Portobello, and for show purposes a kinematograph exhibition was given *en route*.

The Kinematograph Theatre in West Street, Brighton, continues to provide excellent entertainments. The coloured pictures are particularly well received.

Mr. Oliver G. Pike, who has made his mark as a specialist in bird photography, has just been elected Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain. He is, probably, the first to use the kinematograph to reproduce the actual feeding and flight of birds.

By a clerical error, the Urban Co.'s booklet was set down at 1s. in our last issue. This will, as a matter of fact, be sent post free to any applicant to the Urban Co. A postcard with name and address is sufficient.

The National Animated Pictures Company are on a visit to the Assembly Rooms, Bath. Sporting scenes figure largely on the programme, including the Grand National, the University Boat Race and the Cup Final.

Mr. Mackinder of the London School of Economics is now engaged in a scheme for placing before the schools of the Empire carefully constructed lantern slides picturing different portions of the British Empire.

The Committee of the St. Alban's Pageant are inviting tenders for the photographic rights in connection with the pageant. They were wise enough to divide the tender into two, making one half the photographic rights and the other half the kinematograph rights.

Australian Sportsmen are pleased that their man A. B. Postle beat B. R. Day, the British pedestrian, in the recent matches at the Kalgoorlie racecourse, but we doubt if our people will be pleased with the kinematograph pictures which were taken of the event and which are to be sent over for exhibition.

"The Relationship of Dermatology to the other branches of Medical Science" was the title of a lecture by Prof. Dr. Lassar at the meeting of the Dermatological Society of Great Britain on May 22. The lecture was illustrated with a number of beautifully coloured slides relating to the various diseases of the skin.

The British public are taught to connect the living picture industry with France or America. The Parthenon, of Liverpool, now that living pictures are "going strong," has been re-christened "The Theatre Moderne." Yet the bulk of the pictures will probably be "home-made."

The Amateur Photographic Depot, of Oxford Road, Manchester, has just taken up the sale of second-hand films. At the start of next season they intend making a bid for popularity in this department. They have hitherto specialised in second-hand photographic apparatus, but, in their own words, they "see the bioscope has come to stay, and feel confident they will be able to meet the demands of the Northern trade at the start of the new season."

Sidney Carter's New Century Pictures are drawing good houses at Harrogate. The views of "Canada" and "A Tour in North Borneo" are two of the principal items, whilst the scenes in "The Polar Regions" and "The Lucky Necklace" evoke great interest. The following comics cause much amusement: "Murphy's Wake," "Father's Cheese," "Our New Policeman," "The Village Fire Brigade," "The Evil Day," "Wig Chase," "Mr. Jenkins Washes Up," and "The Nightmare."

A monster exhibition of electrical lantern pictures is to be held in aid of the Empire Education Fund on July 18, 19 and 20, at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall, Westminster. The hall will be divided into sections, in each of which separate series of views will be presented, some of them in colours, illustrative of life in India and the several British Colonies. In the aggregate, some 25,000 slides will be thrown on the screens daily, and they will range from 10ft. to 24ft. square. The machines used will have the peculiar advantage of making the pictures visible in daylight as well as by artificial light.

Who's Who.

We wish to make this list of manufacturers and dealers as complete as possible, and shall therefore be glad if any firms as yet omitted will communicate with us. We will then make arrangements for our representative to pay them a call, for the purpose of obtaining the requisite data.

Houghtons' Ltd.

It is as far back as 1834 that Messrs. Claudet & Houghton started business together at 87 High Holborn. Mr. Claudet, who was the first to take up the Daguerreotype process seriously, and practice it as a profession, joined Mr. George Houghton at this early date, and the two continued together till the year 1840, when the firm took the name of George Houghton & Son. Another change came in 1904, when the present company (at 88 and 89 High Holborn) was formed; and the magnitude of the company will be realised somewhat when we name all the other concerns incorporated, thus: George Houghton & Son, Ltd., Joseph Levi & Co., Spratt Bros., Sanderson Camera Works (Holmes Bros.), and Ilex Camera Works (A. C. Jackson). The Optical Branch is carried on at 95 Hatton Garden, whilst Camera and Lantern Works are situated at Mare Street, Hackney, and at Stoke Newington, with "Ensign" Roll Film Works at Walthamstow. The firm is renowned for its enlarging apparatus, and many novel accessories for the lantern. They are originators of the "Sanderson," "Klito," and "Ticka" cameras, and inventors of the celebrated "Ensign" Roll Film, and the Company claim to be the largest manufacturers of photographic apparatus and materials in the United Kingdom.

Romanet & Guilbert.

Established in 1902, Messrs. Romanet & Guilbert of 26 Red Lion Square, have succeeded in developing a very large business. They have show rooms and offices at the above address, with a factory and warehouse at Paris, and a branch business in Brussels. Mr. A. Romanet, who is part proprietor and manager of the London establishment, informs us that they have in process of manufacture a new kinematograph machine which will be on the market in time for the coming season. The firm makes a specialty of high quality condensers for all purposes, and also of objective lenses for the lantern. A special point is made of cultivating the wholesale trade, and their export business has assumed large proportions.

Archer & Sons.

In the year 1848 Mr. W. F. Archer started business at 60 South Castle Street, Liverpool, as an optician and dealer in musical instruments. Mr. Archer very soon turned his attention to the optical lantern, and was not long in conceiving an improved form of that instrument to sell at a popular figure, namely, at one guinea. The guinea lantern enjoyed a large sale, and enabled the inventor to do much towards bringing optical projection into public favour at that early period. The founder of the firm was also responsible for "The Ideal" lantern, which is now made in several sizes, and is supplemented with "The Ideal Dissolver." "The Unilux Bi-Unial," "The Pholinus Mahogany-bodied Lantern," and the "Lightning Carrier" are also inventions of Mr. Archer, together with "The Ideal Blow-through Jet." The firm now trading at 73 Lord Street and at 5 St. George's Crescent, Liverpool, as Archer & Sons, supply every conceivable form of lantern accessories of approved pattern, and the kinematograph is also listed. They have a large stock of lantern slides for hiring out puposes, and at St. George's Crescent they hold a full stock of phonographs and gramophones.

W. C. Hughes & Co.

This firm, established as far back as 1867, is perhaps one of the most important concerns in the lantern trade. Here the instruments are made from first to last, and the huge stock of beautifully finished lanterns and accessories that meet the eye on entering Brewster House impresses one with the fact that the firm in question know their busines well from every possible aspect. Mr. Bishop, who is now proprietor, has been associated with the house for no less than fourteen years. He is a man who evinces a keen insight into the vital necessities of the operator: a truth which is substantiated by the design of the firm's latest triumph, "The Brewstergraph" Kinematograph projector. As we are contemplating a series of articles entitled "Kinematograph Projectors as I See Them," by the Editor, we shall reserve details of the "Brewstergraph" until the publication of the said articles; meanwhile the reader may take it that the projector in question is worthy of the highest admiration. We have handled the machine and find it embodies new featurers of a very practical and helpful nature. Mr. Bishop, who is a fully qualified chemist, holds the diploma of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, and can place at the end of his name the letters S.M.C. It will be remembered that the celebrated "Self-centring Slide Carrier" emanated from Brewster House. At the time, many hundreds of these were instantly sold. We cannot in this short paragraph so much as name the many ingenious devices and inventions emanating from this old-established firm, so numerous are the patents taken out from time to time; we are pleased to say, however, that full facilities have been promised our representative for dealing exhaustively with their various products at a later date.

(To be continued.)

Awkward Subjects for Slides.

Among the attractions at the Conversazione of the Selborne Society, held in the building formerly occupied by the University of London in Burlington Gardens, on the 26th April, under the presidency of Lord Avebury, F.R.S., one of the most important was the extremely interesting and able lecture by Mr. E. J. Bedford, on "Bird Architecture: or Homes Built by Beak and Claws." It was most effectively illustrated by a series of beautiful photographic slides taken by the lecturer, and depicting the needs of many of the more familiar and not a few of the rarer of our British birds, in the secluded and frequently almost inaccessible haunts, selected by them for the security of their eggs and young. Some of the situations were very remarkable. Those, for example, of the sea-fowl, frequenting the rocky cliffs of the Farne islands, were perched upon ledges of rock on the faces and summits of cliffs, seemingly insufficient to allow foothold even for a bird, still less for a four-footed animal or a human being; yet these exposed and rugged rocks were in some places found to be so crowded with sea-fowl that there scarcely seemed space to accommodate, and how the nests and young were accommodated, and identified by the parent birds on their return from journeys in search of food, remained a mystery. One bird had built year after year on an upper shelf of a school library; another in the folds of a curtain in the same school room; while a third had selected a coil of rope hanging upon the wall of a coach-house, and a fourth a coil of wire fencing net. The excellence of the slides, the skill and patience expended in their production, and the graphic and interesting manner in which they and their history were described, elicited the heartiest applause.

Latest Productions.

The Gaumont Co.

Good-night	20 feet
Chemist's Shop	540 ,,
The Hat in the Boudoir	315 ,,
Snap-Shots in Monte Carlo	185 ,,
Scenes in Algiers	400 ,,
The Housekeeper's Tea Party	435 ,,
Ride through Kingston	235 ,,
The Derby (length on application).	— ,,
French Government Airships	295 ,,
Glimpses of India	310 ,,
A Few Minutes in the Far East	440 ,,
The Man that Swallowed the Clock	525 ,,

Graphic Kinematograph Co.

A Woodland Tragedy	470 ,,

Pathé Frères.

Errand Boy Wanted	248 ,,
Vengeance of an Algerian	626 ,,
Out for a Walk	314 ,,
Madames Tantrums	248 ,,
Slave's Love	692 ,,
Charmed Umbrella	297 ,,

Edison Manufacturing Co.

The "Teddy" Bears	935 feet
Daniel Boone	1000 ,,

Hepworth Manufacturing Comapny.

The Boaster	200 ,,
Hair Restorer	300 ,,

Charles Urban Trading Co.

The 1907 Derby	— ,,
Boxing Championship Contests, June 3rd, National Sporting Club	— ,,
The Duel in All Ages	360 ,,
The Short-Sighted Cyclist	325 ,,
The £1,000 Spook	155 ,,
Cairo to Khartoum	800 ,,
The Dog Police of Paris	410 ,,
Herkomer Trophy Motor Trials	140 ,,
Mr. Ogden Armour's Famous Team of Greys	115 ,,
Mr. Walter Winan's Prize Stud	315 ,,

Walturdaw Co.

Trapped by Pinkerton's	750 ,,

We heartily congratulate the Gaumont Co. on having obtained sole rights for taking kinematograph pictures of the Oxford Pageant. This Pageant is to be one of the finest sights of the year. It will graphically illustrate the whole history of Oxford from its most early and primitive stages up to its high position as the head and centre of knowledge and its means of acquiring it. The life and customs of the people will be faithfully portrayed by means of old-world costumes and fashions in perfect keeping with the particular period of history. Every citizen of note will be present—the Mayor, his councillors and aldermen, principals and dignitaries from the colleges, schools and churches. The whole scene will be one of the most brilliant that has been seen in the quiet streets of Oxford for years. As a kinematograph picture it will demand the attention of the English public to no small extent, for we all know how keenly the people appreciate every subject which is purely and characteristically English. The Pageant itself is commanding the attention of the whole country. Exhibitors will find a real good thing in the Oxford Pageant. The subject will ensure its popularity, while the firm which is taking the picture ensures its quality and excellence. That Gaumonts is a firm which can turn out a first class film worthy of the occasion is a foregone conclusion. We call to mind the splendid picture of the University Boat Race by the same firm, and it only seems right and proper that those who made the fine picture of the "race for honour" should also have the distinction of taking the Oxford Historical Pageant, seeing both events are so closely connected with University life. We understand that Mr. A. C. Bromhead, Gaumont's genial manager, is going down to Oxford to personally superintend, and that many of the arrangements connected with the Pageant will be left in his hands. We hope to give further particulars next week.

The Edison productions are invariably well staged and of good photographic quality, but they appear to us to be in many cases too distinctly American in character to go down with the English public, and also of too great a length. A 1000-ft. subject is usually about twice as long as the English showman desires. The two subjects in our list are well up to Edison standard, but they still suffer under these disadvantages. Nevertheless they are well worth inspection. Daniel Boone deals with the "pioneer days" of America. It introduces Indians in a realistic attack on a log cabin, and generally gives a very vivid picture of the rough life lead by the early settlers in the country. "Teddy" Bears is also a cleverly conceived subject. The bears live in a house in the forest, and the film deals with the adventures of a girl who goes to their house. It abounds in amusing situations and the bears at play form a most amusing scene.

There is no rest for the wife with a pretty servant if her husband is a susceptible man. This at least we gather from the latest "Hepwix" subject, which also shows that a jealous woman is a rather more dangerous creature to encounter than a mad bull. The wicked husband finds himself alone with the servant and takes advantage of that circumstance to steal a kiss, in which act his wife detects him, as she enters. This lady is of good size and strength, and proves it at the expense of the culprits with a short stick, which she applies indiscriminately to man and servant. The girl escapes as soon as possible and the injured lady turns her whole attention to her husband, whom she throws on the floor, then kneeling on his chest, pulls out his hair in handfuls. She leaves him practically hairless and the poor creature rushes off to a chemists and buys some "restorer." The servant pours it on his head as he bends over the bath, with the remarkable result that a huge head of hair immediately becomes visible. The wife enters again and makes another attempt to pull it out, but the husband manages to tip her into the bath and to escape from the room. There will be great laughter at the wife's appearance as she emerges from the liquid in the bath, for she is covered with hair and resembles nothing so much as a very hirsute bear. The concluding scene points a doubtful moral, for a fair ground is seen, where the good lady is forced to enact the part of bear to the general delight of the public, and then the hero is seen embracing the servant who was the cause of all the trouble. "Hair Restorer" is the title of the subject.

The Hepworth Manufacturing Co., have another subject called "The Boaster." A gentleman who has rescued a shop girl from the annoying attentions of two youths enters a saloon with evident signs of battle on him, and gives a very highly coloured account of the fracas to friends who enquire what he has been doing. His version of the story is then shown on the screen, from which it would appear that the boys are grown ruffians. Result—the boastful one becomes a hero and is asked to drink on every hand, which leads to further exaggerations as he re-tells the adventure to new listeners. Unhappily the heroine of the tale has entered and heard the highly coloured version of a simple incident and exposes the boaster before leading him from the room by the ear. There is something very convincing about this story. Probably everyone who sees it has been guilty of the fault which it illustrates, at one time or another. Let us hope it will have the effect of preventing further excesses.

The Graphic Kinematograph Co., of Charing Cross Road, who recently gained much kudos for their clever film of the "Ride of the Valkyries" for Covent Garden Opera, has just put out a dramatic "plot" subject under the name of "A Woodland Tragedy," dealing with a collision between poachers and gamekeepers. In the opening scene two gamekeepers make a halt outside the village inn and whilst taking a "refresher" with the party of villagers, two new comers appear with a dog, and take stock of the keepers as they finish their drink and depart towards their round. Hurriedly finishing their drink, the two men are seen to leave the company, and are next discovered busily engaged with dog and ferrets at some rabbit burrows. A view at close range of the rabbits bolting and the dogs in chase is here brought before the eye, and whilst the poachers are intent upon their work the keepers make their appearance from the bushes above, and the poachers with their booty take flight. Eluding the keepers, they bring the gun to bear upon another rabbit or two and the keepers this time get right upon them, and a struggle ensues, of which the poachers get the best and escape. Arriving at a secluded spot they hide the spoil beneath some thick undergrowth and hurry away, eventually reaching a wayside cottage somewhat exhausted. Leaving his companion upon the threshold, one poacher mounts a horse and rides away. Reaching a cottage, he has just strength enough to drop from the horse, and as he staggers and falls exhausted his dog runs from within and trots back and brings out the other poacher, followed by the wife, who helps her husband in. The keepers appear and demand admittance, but are resisted by the wife, who bars the way. During the argument the poachers make their escape from a side window. The keepers eventually espy them in the distance coming down a country road. Hiding themselves in the midst of some bushes they lay in wait and spring out as the poachers pass the spot at a run. A shot from one of the keepers brings down the foremost poacher, whilst the other retaliates with a shot that kills a keeper. Having used his last shot, he turns upon the other keeper with the butt end of his gun and a fierce fight commences. Just at this moment, however, the wife appears upon the scene and picks up a weapon and disables the remaining keeper; the wounded poacher is carried away and the keepers left to their fate.

Every one who has heard of the United States, has heard of Pinkerton's, the detective agency. Pinkerton's was bound to figure in a film sooner or later. It does so in the latest Walturdaw production, which is a "thriller" dealing with an outrage on a bank president, and the capture of the thieves by a detective from the famous establishment alluded to. The story is very cleverly worked out, and the ruse by which the thieves get the president to sign a cheque is quite a plausible one. They secure a photograph of the magnate in scene one. In scene two, one of them is seen preparing a disguise to enable him to impersonate the victim. Scene three shews the villains entering the room of the president. There they secure his signature at the mouth of a revolver and decamp, leaving him senseless. The cheque is cashed by one of the thieves, made up to resemble the president. Then we shift to Pinkerton's office, where a detective genius secures the recognition of the assailant's portrait by the president. After that all is plain sailing. A "fake" paragraph is put in a newspaper and the thieves thereby lured to their ruin. "Trapped by Pinkerton's" is the appropriate title of the film

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"The Duel in All Ages" was taken by the Urban Co. in Lincoln's Inn with the assistance of the redoubtable "Legion of Frontiersmen." It is certainly comprehensive enough, the combats illustrating the weapons of various periods and their use from Roman times to the present day. The encounters include Gladiator v. Retiarius (Roman); Sword v. Buckler (Saxon); Two-handed Sword fight (Henry VIII); Rapiers and Daggers (1579—three pairs of combatants); Dagger and Cloak (Elizabeth); Musketeer v. Guardsman (four pairs), and "Tommy" (with bayonet) v. Pathan (sword and shield).

The Urban Co. was busy at the National Sporting Club on Monday evening, when the fight between Jim Driscoll and Joe Burke for £100 a side and a purse of £250 took place. This fight was a very even one—we believe it took seventeen rounds to bring it to an issue—and the film will be of good length—some 700 ft. Good lighting arrangements were made by the "shadowless" method.

We felt certain the Vitagraph "Bad Man" would come to a bad end. He does so in "A Square Deal." The bad character has had poor luck at cards, been "cleared out" in fact, and he adjourns to a handy wood to get a fresh supply in what we take to be the customary manner in the wild and woolly West, namely by "sticking up" a government messenger and relieving him of his gold. With his ill got gains, the Bad Man returns to the gaming table and finds his luck has turned. He breaks the bank, but just at this point, there enters a body of avengers and the gambler is led out to die. Before the execution his wife intervenes, but is put aside and the Bad Man duly expiates his crime. The rough but considerate miners then make their way to the widow's cabin and place the gold in the baby's cradle—a good climax. The subject is very dramatic, and gives a good idea of the rough and ready methods of the western world.

Pathe Frères list of six new subjects contains films of several different varieties, from an elaborately staged drama called "A Slave's Love" down to a "chase" comic with the title "An Errand Boy Wanted." The first named is beautifully coloured. The story deals with a Roman dignitary who suffers badly from *ennui*. In the opening scene, his slaves are seen attempting to awaken his interest with bales of beautiful cloth, caskets of jewels etc., without success. A beautiful slave is then introduced, and dances seductively before the jaded monarch —with the most satisfactory results, for the latter begins to take a keen interest in life once more, and more particularly in the charmer who has dispelled his boredom,—a proceeding which naturally brings forth the ire of his good lady, and the slave is bundled away. In the following scene a dream of the hero is beautifully represented. Numbers of beautiful gauze-clad creatures go through the various evolutions of a ballet, with the slave as the central figure. The various dresses are coloured so that the effect is almost as pleasing as that of an actual spectacle on the stage. The hero wakes and meets the slave, who is discovered by the jealous wife again, cast into a dungeon and forced to take poison. The hero enters the cell too late, seizes the cup and commits suicide and here the story ends.

"The Charmed Umbrella" is also notable for some pretty dresses and colouring effects. The stage is occupied by a conjurer in ordinary clothes, who performs some preliminary tricks and then, mounting on a table, leaps to the floor, when he is seen to have completely changed his costume to knee

breeches, etc.! He now produces a magic box—labelled as such—and takes out a pair of legs, which he stands on the floor. There follows a body, arms, and at last a head, and the figure of an attractive young lady in the costume of the ballet is revealed and quickly becomes animated! The lady performs her part and vanishes and a magic umbrella makes its appearance in the conjurer's hand. The latter brings it to the floor and when he raises it again, there stands a girl in a brightly coloured costume! In this way, a large number of beautiful assistants is produced, and the magician proceeds to effect successive changes in their appearance and costumes with the assistance of his umbrella. At each transformation the magician's appearance change in harmony. At the conclusion the assistants are "vanished" in a similar way and the conjurer leaps again from the table and resumes his first appearance.

A messenger boy, in charge of a cycle carrier, leaves his bike to deliver a parcel, and his place is taken by a mischievous urchin, who makes off with the carrier. This, in brief, is the plot of "An Errand Boy Wanted." (Pathé). There are exciting developments, the best incidents being those showing the truant being carried along on the carrier, with the latter attached to the back of a motor, and riding headlong through the wall of a bootmaker's shop. The chase is a good one, two of the pursuers limping violently as they follow the boy.

The Kinematograph Shutter.

To use, or not to use, the shutter is a question often uppermost in the minds of operators, and one which has called down more blessings (?) than some would like to own up to. Some operators discard it altogether, regardless of results; others cut it in half and get along after a fashion; others again use two wings; and again, others only one. Out of this multiplicity of methods the question arises, Which is best? We are all striving to abolish the flicker on the screen. Some blame the mechanism of the machine for this; others the film; some the illuminant; and the larger proportion say it is the shutter which is the cause of all the trouble. We are inclined to say it lies with all the above, and that each contention is correct, as far as it goes. But until we get perfection with machinery, that gives absolute correctness in the perforating of the film, a camera which is made to take such film, and the same mechanism, all made from the perfect model, with a shutter adjusted to the requirements of the picture, we shall have to put up with the flicker, or reduce it to a minimum, using the material we have at hand. It is surprising what individual operators use for the shutter, each swearing by his own idea, as though it were of any consequence what material is used so that it is opaque. Brass, zinc, or cardboard all will answer the purpose, and gelatine of various colors for the semi-transparent ones. Each kind of material visibly affects the light, and the puzzling questions with operators are: What is the proper shutter to use under certain conditions? When should the opaque one be used, or the semi-transparent one, or when to entirely dispense with it? We will endeavour to solve this difficulty by advancing the theory "that it all depends on the light," whether oxyhydrogen or electric, the rule differing in the quality of the same, and the distance from the screen that the machine is being worked.

Let us take first the oxyhydrogen (or calcium light). With this the opaque shutter can be replaced by the blue transparent one, if the distance is 30 feet or under, and fairly good results obtained. For over 30 feet—to, say, 65 or 70 feet—it is advisable to use a white transparent gelatine shutter, and for all distance beyond 70 feet good results are obtained without any shutter, although it is inadvisable to separate the distance from the screen more than 85 feet, as too much light is lost even with the most powerful jets on the market. These figures will also hold good when an oxylith generator is used. The makers of Nulite claim that it is suitable for kinematograph projection, but as we have not tried it we cannot give data, but we fancy that 25 or 30 feet from screen would be the utmost limit for this illuminant.

We now turn to the electric light, where the direct current is used. An opaque shutter is useful up to 50 feet from screen; over 50 feet and up to 100 the blue gelatine is good; from 100 to 150 feet distance the white transparent shutter will be all that is necessary; over 150 feet the shutter can be entirely dispensed with.

When using alternating current, about 20 per cent. of the distances can be deducted, and satisfactory results obtained.

While these figures are not mathematically correct, they will be found to be a very serviceable guide. The operator must, of course, use his own judgment and discrimination in selecting shutter between distances given, and if our readers will test and report the results they obtain it will be useful information for the craft at large, and by comparing data useful and reliable tables may be formulated for future publication.

Moving Picture World, U.S.A.

Miscellaneous.

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